

**DECISION**



**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL  
OF THE UNITED STATES**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

*Reports*  
**PLI**  
**14522**

**FILE:**B-198822

**DATE:**August 8, 1980

**MATTER OF:**United Ammunition Container, Inc.

**DIGEST:**

1. In cases where contracting agency is authorized to correct mistake in bid after bid opening, GAO review is restricted to determining whether contracting agency had reasonable basis for determination to correct.
2. Where bidder's worksheet shows bidder omitted cost for part of item and what additional cost for part would be if omission had not occurred, there was reasonable basis for contracting agency's determination to correct bid.

*[Protest ALLEGING AWARDEE]*

United Ammunition Container, Inc. (United), protests the Army's decision to permit J. C. Baxter Company (Baxter) ~~to~~<sup>ER</sup> correct a mistake in bid alleged after the opening of bids under invitation for bids (IFB) No. DAAA03-80-B-0014 issued by Pine Bluff Arsenal. *DLG 05051*

The decision to permit the correction was made by the Army pursuant to Defense Acquisition Regulation (DAR) § 2-406.3(b)(1) (1976 ed.). The decision authorized the correction of Baxter's low unit prices for fiber containers from \$0.2260 (with first article) and \$0.2252 (without first article) to \$0.2670 and \$0.2662, respectively. The correction was authorized because it was determined from the Baxter worksheet, submitted after the request for bid verification for suspected mistake, that Baxter failed to include in its price one of two metal ends on the fiber container. The intended charge for the omitted metal end was also determined from the bidder's worksheet. The bid as corrected remains the low bid.

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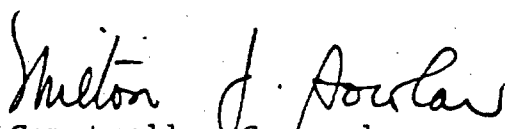
*05051 J.C.*

United protests the correction on the basis that it is unlikely that Baxter made an error because it is an experienced manufacturer, the specifications call attention to two metal ends, the \$0.041 added to correct the unit prices is high for a metal end, and it is unusual to add selling and administrative expenses to material cost as Baxter has done.

Our review in these cases where the contracting agency is authorized to correct mistakes alleged after bid opening is restricted to determining whether the contracting agency had a reasonable basis for its decision. John Amentas Decorators, Inc., B-190691, April 17, 1978, 78-1 CPD 294; 53 Comp. Gen. 232, 235 (1973). Notwithstanding United's contentions, the worksheet submitted by Baxter shows that Baxter did prepare its bid on the basis of one metal end per container, that the cost for each metal end was intended to be \$0.041 (as supported by a supplier's quotation and the addition of cost factors applied in the worksheet), and that it did apply sales and administration expenses to the material costs in preparing the bid originally submitted.

Therefore, we conclude that there was a reasonable basis for the Army's determination to correct Baxter's bid.

Accordingly, the protest is denied.

  
For the Comptroller General  
of the United States